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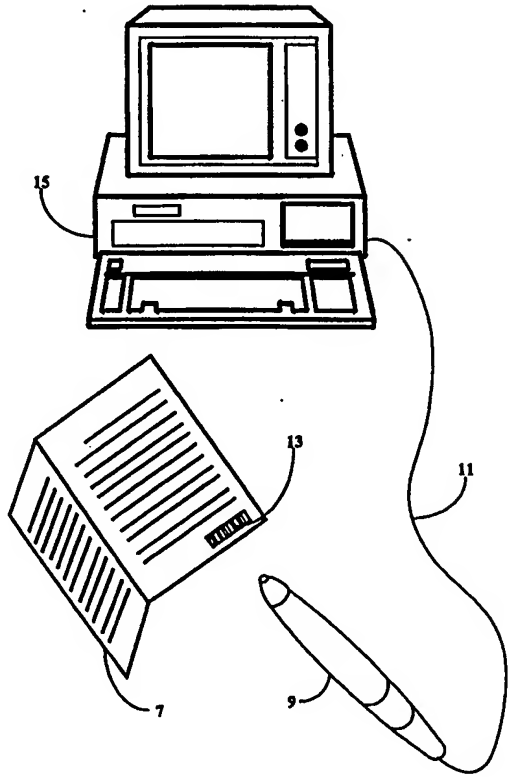
(54) Title: METHOD FOR COLLECTING URLs FROM PRINTED MEDIA

(57) Abstract

A method for providing Universal Resource Locators (URLs) to potential users of the URLs (13) has the URLs (13) presented as machine-readable code in visible media, such as advertisements in newspapers (7) and magazines and in TV presentations. A machine reader, such as a bar code reader (9), connected to a computer (15) having a WEB browser application, is used to acquire the URL (13), and the acquired URL (13) is provided to the WEB browser application in the computer (15). In some cases the URL (13) is stored for future use, and in other cases the URL (13) is used immediately to direct the computer (15) or connect to the Internet Server storing the WEB page associated with the URL (13), and to download and display the WEB page, URLs (13) may be numeric code associated with URLs (13) in a table accessible on a Server on the Internet, printed or otherwise displayed bar code, magnetic ink, and other sorts of machine-readable code.



Method for Collecting URLs from Printed Media

Field of the Invention

The present invention is in the field of data collection devices, and has particular application to devices and systems for reading and scanning media for the purpose of storing information on a computer.

Background of the Invention

In the present age of the Internet, companies offering products or services for sale are creating what are known as Web sites on the Internet World Wide Web (WWW. These Web sites are accessible on the WWW by addresses termed Universal Resource Locators (URL).. Consumers who prefer to shop from their homes and corporate entities engaged in buying and trading with other corporations are targets for URLs published in printed media and presented in television programs and advertisements by companies who see Web sites as a viable sales tool.

A URL address is a complex string of characters that includes punctuation marks and separators. A URL can sometimes be quite long when compared to conventional codes used with computers, such as document paths. The character string that is a URL is designed to interact with computer software programs that are meant to act as navigation aids for users attempting to locate or "travel" to a desired destination on the Internet. These software programs are typically known as browsers. A standard URL contains language symbolized by

What is claimed is:

1. A method for providing a Universal Resource Locators (URL) comprising a character string to a computer user, comprising steps of:

(a) converting the character string to a machine-readable indicia; and

(b) presenting the machine-readable indicia in a visible media available to the computer user.

2. The method of claim 1 wherein the machine-readable indicia is a bar code, and the bar code is provided on a printed presentation.

3. The method of claim 1 wherein the machine-readable indicia is a bar code, and wherein the bar code is presented in at least one frame of a television presentation.

4. The method of claim 1 wherein the URL is converted to a numeric code of fewer numerals than the number of characters of the character string of the URL, and the numeric code is converted into machine-readable indicia and presented in a visible media.

5. The method of claim 4 wherein the machine-readable indicia is a bar code.

6. The method of claim 1 wherein the machine-readable indicia is the URL character string printed in magnetic ink.

7. A method for acquiring a Universal Resource Locator (URL) for a browser application on a computer, comprising steps of:

(a) reading the URL from a visible media with a machine-reader; and

(b) storing the URL in a file accessible to the browser application.

8. The method of claim 7 wherein the URL in visible media is a bar code and the machine-reader is a bar code reader.

9. The method of claim 7 wherein the URL in visible media is a character string printed in magnetic ink, and the machine-reader is a magnetic character reader.

10. A system for directing a Web-browser application running on a computer having an Internet connection to load and display a WEB page from an Internet Server, comprising steps of:

(a) acquiring a Universal Resource Locator (URL) for the WEB page by reading the URL from a visible media with a machine-reader having a communication link to the computer;

(b) providing the URL to a browser application running on the computer: and

(c) directing the browser to connect to Internet Server over the Internet connection and to download and display the WEB page.

11. The method of claim 10 wherein the machine-reader is a bar code reader and the URL is a bar code representing the URL.

12. The method of claim 10 wherein the machine-reader is a magnetic character reader, and the URL is provided in magnetic ink in print media.

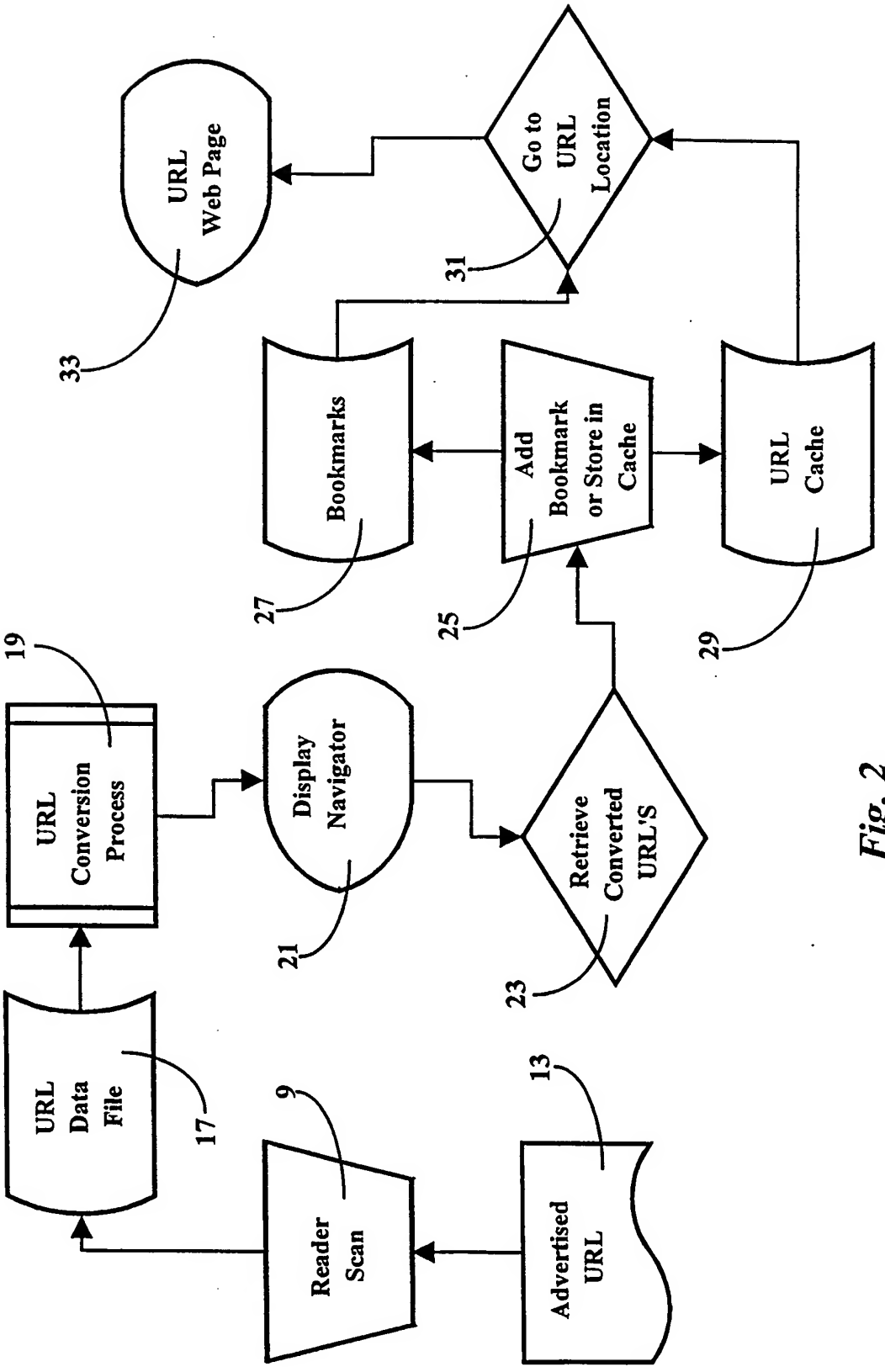

URL Web Page
33
Go to URL Location
31
Bookmarks
27
Add Bookmark or Store in Cache
25
URL Cache
29
19
URL Conversion Process
Display Navigator
21
Retrieve Converted URL'S
23
URL Data File
17
9
Reader Scan
13
Advertised URL

Fig. 2

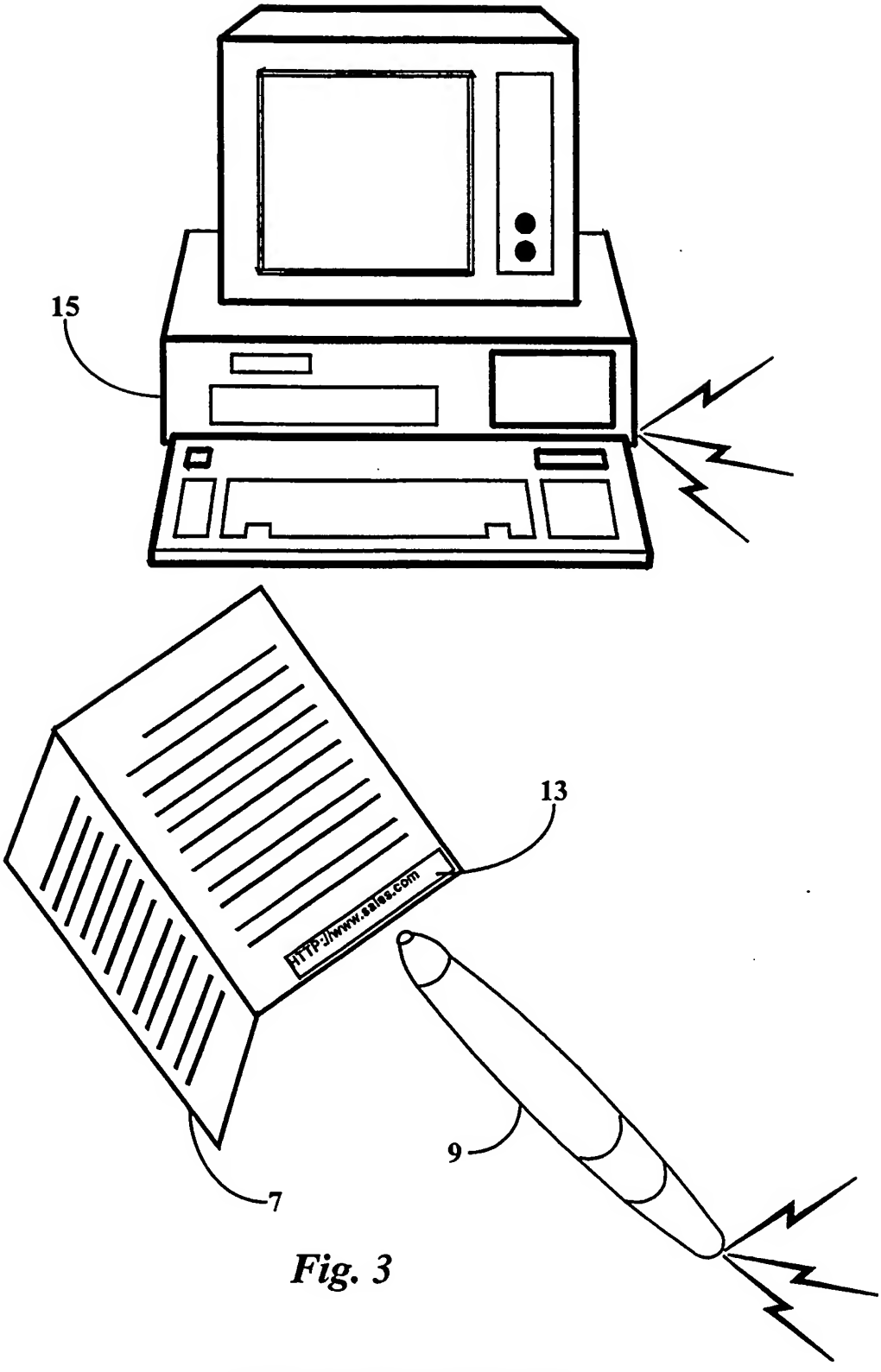
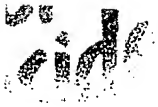


Fig. 3



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About Elonex

Founded in March 1986, Elonex plc supplies complete IT solutions to a customer base that ranges from private individuals to multinational corporations and government departments. The company designs, manufactures, markets and supports a complete range of desktop PCs, notebooks, and network servers. It also provides computer support services encompassing system specification, configuration, installation and maintenance.

In response to the demands of its customer base, Elonex has developed from a computer manufacturer to a complete business solutions provider. Under the title of Elonex Solutions (ES), the company provides a broad portfolio of offerings including IT Consultancy, System & User Training, Disaster Recovery/Business Continuity, Cabling, Network Design & Installation, Facilities Management, Email, Internet, Intranet and Entranet Systems, Security, Desktop Services, Maintenance & Hotline Support and Finance & Leasing Arrangements.

Elonex's hardware products are built to order at its London headquarters and at other sites in Europe. It has seven sister companies around the world. Elonex is one of the few computer specialists which designs and manufactures its own PCs; it has a large patent portfolio incorporating diverse technologies for many different industry sectors. The company's wealth of knowledge and experience gives it a huge advantage over its competitors in delivering high quality products and services directly to customers.

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